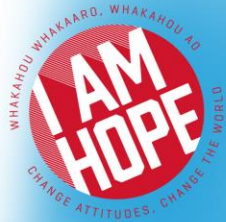


By Mike King and Tommy Wilson

Illustrated by Brigita Botma



TR & Mack

Little People Big Feelings



Charlie's a girl with a lot on her mind
The voice in her head, is being unkind

It's not really a voice, it's actually a thought
But for the last few weeks, it's been happening a lot

While other kids run around, and happily play
She's lost in her thoughts, and feels like a stray



*I just want to fit in, She thinks to herself
I don't want to be different, and be by myself*

A boy is being mocked, by a group of her peers
They are all laughing, as he wipes away tears

She wants to go over, to help the boy out
But the voice in her head immediately shouts



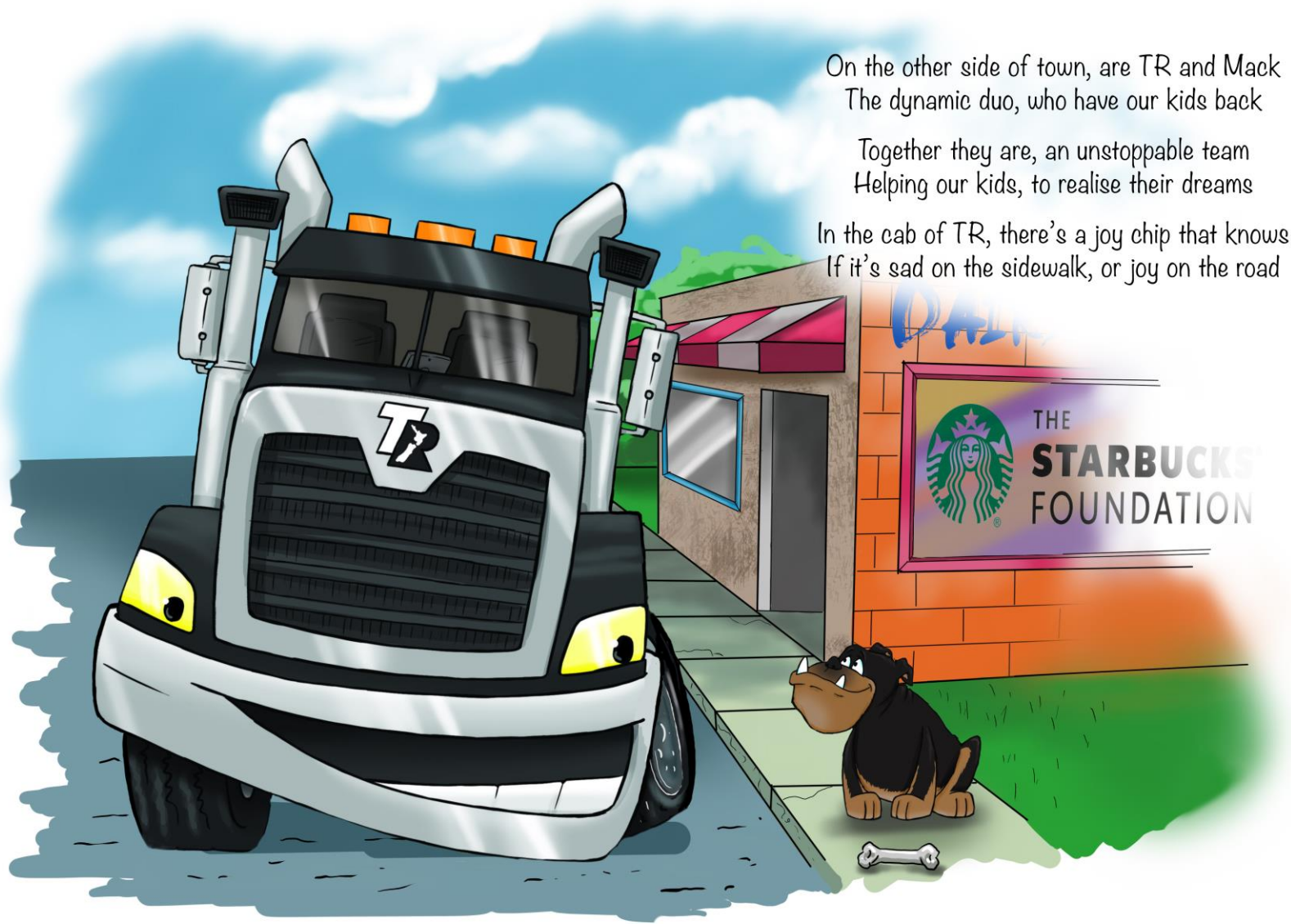
You know what will happen if you mess with the boys!

You'll be kicked to the curb like an unwanted toy!

She trudges off slowly, upset with herself

I should have done more, he's all by himself





On the other side of town, are TR and Mack
The dynamic duo, who have our kids back

Together they are, an unstoppable team
Helping our kids, to realise their dreams

In the cab of TR, there's a joy chip that knows
If it's sad on the sidewalk, or joy on the road

All of a sudden, the joy chip rings double
And both of them know, someone's in trouble

Quick as a flash, they hit the road
As TR and Mack switch to 'find the kid' mode





As they're roaring along, they see Charlie who's down

The look on her face, causes TR to frown

"Kia Ora there Charlie. why so blue?

Is there anything me and Mack can do?"

"I'm not really sure." Is what Charlie said
"Unless you know something about voices in heads?"

"Everyday when I wake, I beat myself up
With negative thoughts, I just wish they'd let up"





"I know that feeling," said Mack earnestly
"It's really annoying, and you want to break free"

"On the outside we're good, happy and smiling
But deep down inside, it's sadness and crying"



“Have you tried a counsellor,” said Mack with a shout
“They’ll make it real easy to figure stuff out”



"Teachers have told me, about counselling before
But I'm scared I'll sound stupid, when I walk through the door"

"And what about other kids, what will they think?
If the meanies find out, they'll make me feel stink"





"It takes courage," said TR, "to sit down and talk
Even the bravest kids, need our support"

"So we can come with you, so you won't feel alone
And after the session, we can drive you back home"

Over the next few weeks, Charlie's world got brighter
The weight of the world, seemed to lift off her shoulders

It felt strange to wake up, and not have dark thoughts
She was so glad the counsellor, had helped her to talk





As she headed to school, she looked up to see

A boy on the sidewalk, down on his knees

“Hey little man, why are you so solemn?

Is there anything I can do, to help with your problem?”

"I wish I was like you, you're cool and assured
I feel like a loser, I'm so insecure"

"I just want to fit in, and be part of the crowd
But I live on the outside, stuck in a cloud"



"I was the same," said Charlie to the boy
"I'd compare myself to others, it didn't bring joy"

"I used to think that everyone was better than me
And that filled my mind with negativity"



"Then some friends suggested, I go and talk about
All my negative feelings, with an expert in self-doubt"

She was a counsellor, who wasn't what I thought
She was a specialist, in fixing scrambled thoughts"

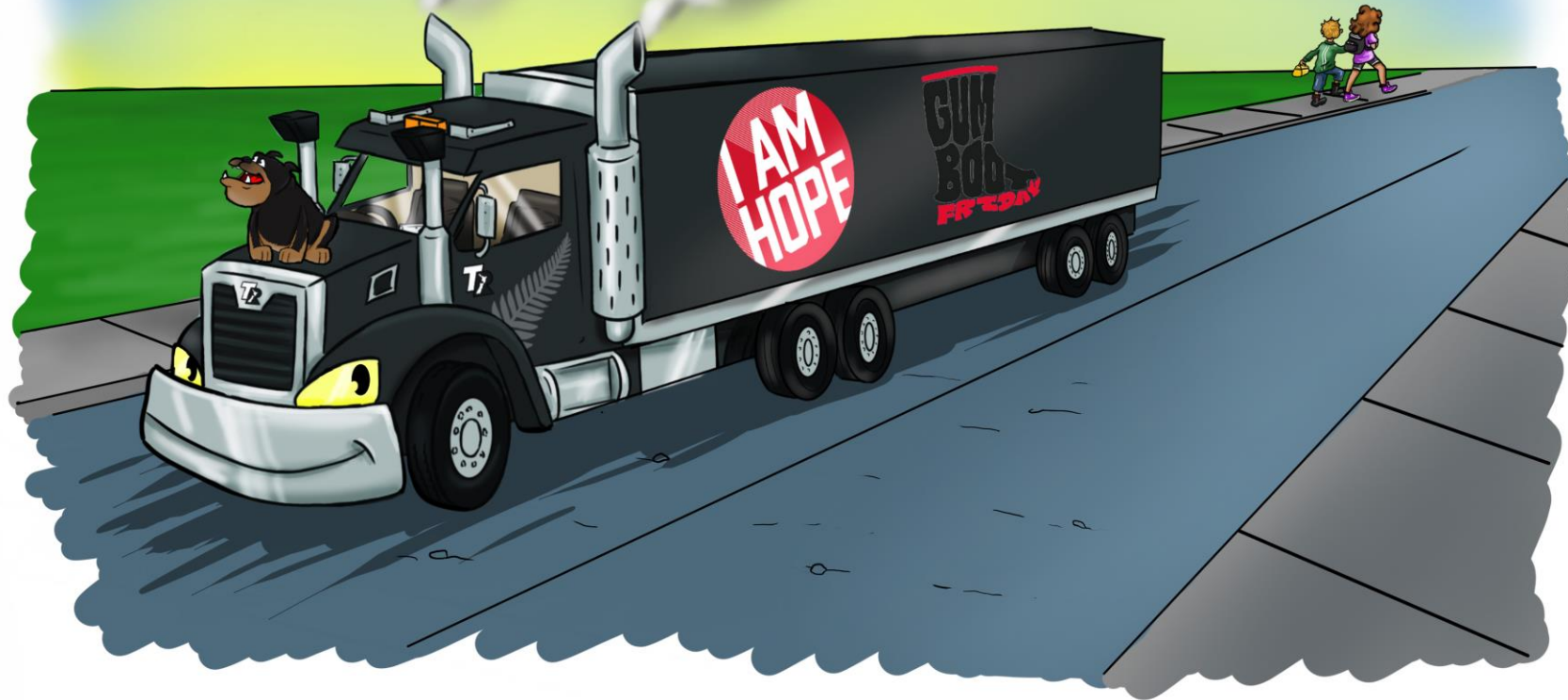
"after our session, I felt light as a feather
If you think that will help, we can both go together"



Off in the distance, watching from afar
Overwhelmed with pride, were Mack and TR



With one final look, they thought *our job here is done*
So Mack climbed on TR, and set off into the sun



TR & Mack. It's Cool to Korero



By writing this book our aim is to forever change the way Kiwi kids think, act, and feel about talking to a counsellor.

Young people tell us a major barrier to talking to someone is the stigma associated with counselling. Current eligibility rules mean free counselling is not easily accessible to a young person unless they have been diagnosed with a mental illness.

For a young person, being labelled 'mentally ill' by their peers means counselling is not seen as an early prevention solution, it is seen as a crisis intervention.

By changing the perception of counselling and moving it from 'crisis intervention' to 'just a conversation' we are hoping young people will feel more comfortable talking about little problems, before they become big problems that lead to overwhelming thoughts.

Much love

Mike King

